

## **Standard 7: Environment & Society**

The student will analyze how the interactions of heredity, experience, learning and culture influence social decisions and social change.

### **A. Environmental Quality**

#### **1. Investigate factors that influence environmental quality.**

a. Use primary and secondary data sources to investigate influences on environmental quality such as:

- population growth
- age distribution
- age, gender, race and ethnicity
- over-consumption
- the perception of the capacity of technology to solve problems
- poverty
- consumption of natural resources
- different economic, political, cultural and religious perceptions about the relationship between people and the environment.

### **B. Individual and Group Actions and the Environment**

1. Examine the influence of individual and group actions on the environment and explain how groups and individuals can work to promote and balance interests through:

- Government policies;
- Actions having to do with environmental issues such as energy use and other forms of consumption, waste disposal, resource management;
- Education about the importance of natural resources and ecological processes.
- Action at various levels of citizen action (school-wide, city-wide, county, statewide, national, international)
- Using guidelines for decision making (consequences, sufficient evidence, alternatives, effectiveness for action)
- Modes of action (persuasion, consumerism, political, eco-management)

### **C. Cultural Perspectives and the Environment**

1. Investigate cultural perspectives and dynamics and apply their understanding in context to:

- Explain that differences in the behavior of individuals arise from the interaction of culture and experience.
  - Different groups of people place greatly differing values on the same kind of good or service.
  - Those who will receive the benefits are not necessarily those who will bear the costs.
- Give past and current examples to show how the decisions of one generation both provide and limit the range of possibilities open to the next generation.
- Give past and current examples to show how one generation may have to bear the costs or benefits of the decisions of another generation.

### **D. Political Systems and the Environment**

1. Understand how different political systems account for, manage, and affect natural resources and environmental quality.

- Define public policy as public officials taking action on, and allocating resources for something that affects the people within a given area of authority.
- Identify the private sector, government and public sector as three parts of society involved in public policy making.
- Evaluate, take and defend positions on which part(s) of society may be best suited to deal with certain problems.
- Explain the role of public policy in dealing with environmental problems in society.
  - Explain that there are not enough resources to satisfy all of the desires of people and so there has to be a way of deciding who gets what resources.
  - Investigate and evaluate how public policies serve to distribute benefits and burdens of society, manage the allocation of resources and manage conflict.
  - Analyze policies of market participants or government agencies and evaluate their affect on the production and distribution of resources.
- Explain the role of public policy in dealing with environmental justice problems in society.
- Analyze and evaluate governmental policies that try to bring about change or impede it through policies, incentives, or direct coercion.
- Investigate various national and international policies and practices related to energy use, waste disposal, ecological management, manufacturing and population that affect the global environment.
- Explain how the growing worldwide interdependence of social, economic, and ecological systems means that policy changes in one place in the world may have effects in other places.
- Analyze and evaluate policy changes that cause conflict because the changes benefit some groups more than others.

## **E. Economics and Environment**

1. Analyze and explain global economic and environmental connections.
  - Explain that differences in climate and uneven distribution of natural resources result in the need for trade.
  - Analyze examples to illustrate that international trade is often complicated by political motivation.
  - Give current examples to illustrate that the importance and use of resources changes over time and varies under different economic and technological systems.
  - Investigate and analyze how industrialization brings an increased demand for and use of energy, which contributes many more goods and services but also leads to the rapid depletion of earth's energy resources and increases environmental risks associated with some energy resources.

## **F. Technology and Environment**

1. Investigate and examine the social and environmental impacts of various technologies and technological systems on the environment including how:
  - Technologies having to do with food production, sanitation or disease prevention result in the rapid increases in human population;
  - Agricultural technologies require trade-offs between increased production and environmental harm and between efficient production and social values.
2. Investigate a decision involving the implementation of a new technology and present an assessment of risks, costs and benefits, identification of those who suffer, those who pay, those who gain, what the risks are, and who bears them.

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